



**WEST 102ND & 103RD STREETS BLOCK ASSOCIATION**

# NEWSLETTER

FALL 2020

VOL. 50, NO. 3

## Your Vote Is Your Voice! Make Sure Yours Is Heard Loud and Clear

By DAYLE VANDER SANDE

**ELECTION DAY IS TUES., NOV. 3.** It is said voting is both a duty and a privilege. We have one direct opportunity at the polling booth to pursue happiness for the good of our nation each term, and now, with early voting and absentee ballots readily available, it has never been easier in New York State to vote.

### HOW TO REGISTER

If you are eligible but not yet registered to vote, the deadline is **Fri., Oct. 9**, to register in person or online to vote in the upcoming election. Visit the New York City Board of Elections [website](#), or call **1-866-Vote-NYC (1-866-868-3692)** or **TTY-212-487-5496** to check your registration status and register, if necessary. You may also register via the Department of Motor Vehicles at this [website](#).

### EARLY VOTING

Early voting will take place **Oct. 24 through Nov. 1**. Our local early-voting poll site will be at **West Side High School, 140 W. 102nd St., between Amsterdam Ave. and Columbus Ave.**, according to the following schedule:

- Sat., Oct. 24, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Sun., Oct. 25, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Mon., Oct. 26, 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- Tues., Oct. 27, noon to 8 p.m.
- Wed., Oct. 28, noon to 8 p.m.
- Thurs., Oct. 29, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- Fri., Oct. 30, 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- Sat., Oct. 31, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Sun., Nov. 1, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

### ABSENTEE BALLOTS

**Apply ASAP:** The application deadline is **Tues., Oct. 27**. You can apply online for a general absentee ballot for the Nov. 3 election [here](#). **Note: Even if you applied for an absentee ballot for the primary election, you must apply again for the general election.**

The NYC Board of Elections has already begun mailing out absentee ballots and now provides an absentee ballot tracking system. Go [here](#) to check the status of your application and track your ballot. The system is updated every 24 hours, and applications take up to 72 hours to be entered.

If you are visually impaired or have a disability that requires you to use an accessible version of the absentee ballot that can be read by a screen reader, you may apply [here](#) for an accessible ballot.

### BEFORE YOU VOTE

Your ballot is unique to your district and party. Before voting, visit [here](#) and enter your home address to see a sample of the ballot, find your poll site, check for an accessible entrance, and look up your voting districts.

For further information, contact the New York County (Manhattan) Board of Elections at 200 Varick Street, 10th Floor, New York, NY 10014; phone: (212) 886-2100; fax: (646) 638-2047; email: [voterreg@boe.nyc.ny.us](mailto:voterreg@boe.nyc.ny.us)--Tiffany Townsend, Commissioner (Democrat), and Frederic M. Umame, Commissioner (Republican).

### CAVEAT DRESSER!

Section 8-104 of New York State election law covers electioneering, campaigning for a candidate within a certain

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### UPCOMING EVENTS:

- Halloween via Zoom & Solstice Caroling (see page 3)
- Next talk on local history (see page 5)

**THE WEST 102ND &  
103RD STREETS BLOCK  
ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER**

[info@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:info@w102-103blockassn.org)

Hedy Campbell, editor; Amy Edelman, copy editor; Ariana Koblitz, designer. Comments and questions related to the Association or Newsletter are welcomed.

Address letters to Newsletter Editor, P.O. Box 1940, New York, NY 10025. Email may be sent to [editor@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:editor@w102-103blockassn.org).

Phone messages may be left at (212) 865-8524. Previous issues of the Newsletter are available online at [w102-103blockassn.org](http://w102-103blockassn.org).

**EMAIL LIST**

The Block Association maintains an email list to notify residents about important matters that arise between issues of the Newsletter. You can join the list by sending your email address, full name, home address (with apartment number), and phone number to [email@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:email@w102-103blockassn.org).

**GUARD SCHEDULE**

See article on right for an update.

# Board Votes to Reinstate Security Guard Service

By BOB AARONSON

**A**T ITS SEPTEMBER MEETING, the Board of Directors reviewed responses to last May's survey of residents regarding the guard service. Of the 30 responses, 14 supported reinstating the guard service while eight advocated elimination. The remaining responses raised questions about how effective the service has been and what the police department recommends. Several of the responses also included offers to help support the service either administratively or financially.

Board members noted evidence here and there of increasing crime as the pandemic goes on, as well as a recent reported attempt to jimmy the lock of one of the small mid-block buildings on W. 103rd St. and an incident of vandalism on W. 102nd St. (see page 5).

The Board then voted to reconstitute the Security Committee and prepare a budget proposal for approval

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## Vote



distance of a voting location.

However, electioneering can also be construed to mean clothing or accessories such as a "political banner, button, poster or placard." Although enforcing the ban is part of the training poll workers receive, it's hard to imagine that showing up to vote wearing a RUTH SENT ME button would raise any NYC poll employee's hackles. But by law, it could. Generally poll workers will ask you to remove the item in question and you can then vote as planned.

**CONTACT YOUR PUBLIC OFFICIALS FOR FURTHER HELP WITH VOTING**

Much of the information for this article came from City Councilwoman Helen Rosenthal's office, which provides all manner of assistance. If you need help, call (212) 873-0282, leave a message, and someone in her office will call you back as soon as possible. Or email [helen@helenrosenthal.com](mailto:helen@helenrosenthal.com). You can always visit her [website](http://website), where you'll find all sorts of information that is updated daily.

## BLOCK ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

Regular Block Association meetings are usually held on the second Tuesday of the month at 8 p.m., via Zoom. Email [info@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:info@w102-103blockassn.org) if you'd like to attend.

Oct. 13

Nov. 10

Dec. 8

(Special Event: Presentation on Rosario Candela)

## UPCOMING BLOCK ASSOCIATION EVENTS

**Zoom Halloween Parade** (see p. 3)

Sat., Oct. 31

6 p.m.

RSVP to [halloween@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:halloween@w102-103blockassn.org)

**Rosario Candela Presentation** (see p. 5)

Tues., Dec. 8

8 p.m.

RSVP to [AMZoom@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:AMZoom@w102-103blockassn.org)

**Winter Newsletter**

Early December

**Solstice Caroling** (see p. 3)

Mon., Dec. 21

7 p.m.

865 West End Ave.



## Who Was That Masked Neighbor?

**WE ALL SEEM TO HAVE GOTTEN PRETTY GOOD** at recognizing people even with the lower halves of their faces concealed. By now, some of us have even come to recognize the patterns of the masks, bandannas, and gaiters of our nearest and dearest. It seems like the right time to up the ante, don't you think? If we all wear brand-new Block Association logo masks, we can hone our powers of observation and support our hardworking community organization in one fell swoop.

The masks are silver with our logo imprinted in black. They're machine-washable, three-ply polyester with stretchy ear loops. The design includes a vertical center seam to ensure a close fit, and a point that extends up onto the bridge of the nose. They're available in small/medium (7 1/4" wide x 5 1/2" long) or large/extra large (8" wide x 6 1/4" long). If enough people indicate interest, children's sizes can be made available. Each mask costs \$10. If you'd like to order, please email [editor@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:editor@w102-103blockassn.org) or call (212) 865-8524.

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## Guard Service

at the October meeting. If you'd like to join the committee or have ideas about enhancing security, please email [security@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:security@w102-103blockassn.org).



## Solstice Caroling Remains on the Calendar . . . So Far

By HEDY CAMPBELL

**THE OPERATIVE WORDS ARE SO FAR.** If the infection rate in the neighborhood remains low, and there are no unforeseen calamities, we hope to proceed with our annual Solstice Caroling event on Mon., Dec. 21, at 7 p.m. Anthony Bello, who has been leading the group for decades, is game to give it a go again this year, albeit with some modifications: We'll meet outside in front of 865 West End Ave., rather than in the lobby. We'll wear masks, of course (see left). We'll keep our individual pods a fair distance from one another, as an additional protection.

It'll also be a bring-your-own song-sheet event. You'll be able to follow along on your phone or tablet, or find the booklet [here](#). We're still working out whether there's a way to safely enjoy refreshments afterward; our traditional cider may have to go down the drain.

There'll be an announcement confirming or canceling the event in our December newsletter. We'll also send a message to our email list--if you aren't on the list, go to our [website](#) and click "Join Us." We'll also post flyers on building bulletin boards. For more information, write [solstice@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:solstice@w102-103blockassn.org)

## Halloween Parade: The Zoom Edition

**SADLY, BECAUSE OF COVID-19,** the holiday parade sponsored annually by the Block Association has to be canceled this year. Instead we'd like to host a virtual parade on Zoom for children (and adults) who want to show off their costumes. If you would like to participate in this virtual parade, which will take place on Sat., Oct. 31, at 6 p.m., please RSVP by sending an email indicating the number of children and adults who are interested to [halloween@W102-103blockassn.org](mailto:halloween@W102-103blockassn.org). And if you simply want to see all the colorful, inventive costumes, use that same email address to ask for the Zoom link.

Finally, while there'll be an audience of adults in attendance to compliment and applaud, the candy will, regrettably, have to be BYO.



# Fall Mulching Project Needs Coordinator

**E**ACH AUTUMN, WE LIKE TO GIVE **OUR STREET TREES A LITTLE LOVE.** We prepare them for the winter by cleaning trash out of the wells and tucking a layer of mulch around the trunks, which provides some protection from the cold and the salt and other chemicals used to de-ice sidewalks. In years past, we've also planted daffodil bulbs, provided by New York City for the last 19 years as a commemoration of the World Trade Center attack. The city-sponsored daffodil project is on hold this year, however, so we'll have to purchase bulbs on our own . . . if the event takes place.

We hope that we don't have to forgo the cleanup, but unless someone steps forward to coordinate it, we'll have no other choice. The board member who usually takes charge of this event is out of town for a bit, but is available to provide all the how-to information a volunteer could want. We can provide lists of people who have helped with the event in the past, gardening tools, a copy of a past year's flyer announcing the event, nursery recommendations, and funds. The new coordinator gets to choose the date.

Please email [trees@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:trees@w102-103blockassn.org) to volunteer.



## Help Wanted



**I**T'S A LITTLE BIT SELFISH, BUT WE'RE **HOPING THAT THE CHALLENGES OF THE PANDEMIC** have gotten some of you thinking about how important your ties to your community are. Those who are well connected locally have certainly enjoyed the benefits of those relationships in recent months. But for those of you who have not before taken advantage of the opportunities offered right here on our blocks, it's the perfect time to get involved. Or maybe the reduction in activities that the pandemic has forced upon you simply leaves you with some spare time you can offer us? We're good either way! We have a variety of projects in need of helpers. Some are ongoing. Some are single-shot initiatives. Find one that suits you and give us a shout! Aside from a fall tree-well coordinator, as discussed in the article above, we also need:



### 50TH ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE VOLUNTEERS:

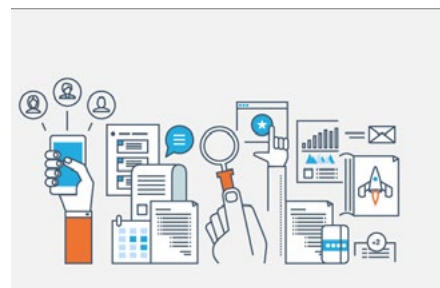
In 2021, we'll be celebrating our golden anniversary! Have you lived here that long? Your input is welcome. Are you a newcomer who's interested in the history? Your input is welcome too! We'd like to figure out a way to commemorate this important occasion, even if it has to be in a socially-distanced format. Email [anniversary@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:anniversary@w102-103blockassn.org).



### SECURITY COMMITTEE VOLUNTEERS:

We've reviewed the results of our recent survey and considered many factors.

We'd like to reinstate guard service but in a way that ensures we'll get quality service for our money. Email [security@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:security@w102-103blockassn.org).



### DIGITAL STRATEGIST:

Normally, the Block Association prides itself on keeping in touch with every resident of the neighborhood via the quarterly newsletter, which gets slid under every single one of the more than 2,000 apartment doors in our territory. With safety in mind, this past summer we switched over to a digital version of the newsletter. Much to our chagrin, we're now reaching only a fraction of our usual audience. We'd very much like to broaden our digital distribution but need a volunteer to help get us there. Email [info@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:info@w102-103blockassn.org).

# Tune in for Our Next Talk

**T**HE BLOCK ASSOCIATION IS PLEASED TO PRESENT A SPECIAL TALK about the Candela Corners, two buildings in our neighborhood that were built by legendary architect Rosario Candela. The event will take place on Tues., Dec. 8, at 8 p.m., via Zoom.

Although better known for his Upper East Side buildings, including a Rockefeller triplex on Park Ave., Candela is also responsible for 865 and 875 West End Ave., both built in 1924. A baker's dozen of his buildings can be found up and down West End Ave., in fact.

Anthony Bello, a longtime Block Association resident, has generously agreed to present an extract from his highly acclaimed lecture on this subject, which he originally created for Landmark West! and has presented several times to sold-out audiences. He'll speak for about half an hour and then take questions from the audience.

Anthony is a graduate of the Pratt Institute School of Architecture and the Bank Street Graduate School of Education. He is also a professional

singer and pianist, and is well known in the neighborhood for leading the annual Solstice Caroling for the past 37 years. In addition, he is very involved in the Merchant's House Museum, and is creating virtual behind-the-scenes tours on its behalf. (See "Meet Your Talented Neighbors" on page 9.)

To attend the Candela talk, please RSVP to [AMZoom@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:AMZoom@w102-103blockassn.org).



The Candela Corners, 865 and 875 West End Ave.  
Credit: Hedy Campbell

## Crime Blotter

By BOB AARONSON

**O**N THE MORNING OF WED., AUG. 26, the entry door (and doorframe) of a townhouse on the south side of W. 103rd St. between West End Ave. and Riverside Dr. was found to be damaged in an apparent forced-entry attempt. It is not known exactly what time this occurred. Neighbors offered that someone was seen in front of more than one of the townhouses, but no details were provided.

Early on the morning of Sun., Sept. 13, a vandal attacked a townhouse on the north side of W. 102nd St. between West End Ave. and Riverside Dr. (see photo). A security camera video recorded the attack as occurring at 5:15 a.m., though the camera clock is known to be about thirty minutes

ahead of actual time. The face of the apparent perpetrator is visible for less than a second.



Morning of Sept 13., townhouse on W. 102nd St.

## HALL OF FAME

### Would You Like to Make a Fourth?

**D**ID YOU KNOW THAT THE BLOCK ASSOCIATION OPERATES A NEIGHBORHOOD HALL OF FAME for residents of long standing? It's true! We launched it in 2010 and are proud to have initiated 31 people so far.

All you have to do to qualify is to have lived within Block Association territory for 50 years or more. That means that if you moved into the area in 1970 or before, you qualify. What's the territory? W. 102nd and W. 103rd Sts. between Riverside Dr. and Broadway, including the south corners of W. 102nd and the north corners of W. 103rd and the buildings on West End Ave. in between.

Participants—we've identified three new candidates for this year so far!—are interviewed, usually in person, but currently by phone or Zoom or from a safe distance outdoors. If participants don't mind, they're photographed by neighbor Gus Butera. Honorees are usually introduced at our Annual Meeting, but this year we're instead planning the induction ceremony as a separate Zoom event. Each honoree will be virtually presented with a certificate and small gift; home delivery of the certificate and gift will be arranged. Attendance at the meeting is not required. Bios and photos of our newest inductees will be posted on our [website](http://www.w102-103blockassn.org).

Click on the "Neighborhood Hall of Fame" tab on our [website](http://www.w102-103blockassn.org) to read past inductees' bios and see their portraits. If you qualify, or know someone you think might, please contact Hedy Campbell at [editor@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:editor@w102-103blockassn.org) or (212) 865-8524.

# Block Association's Annual Meeting Report

By CYNTHIA DOTY

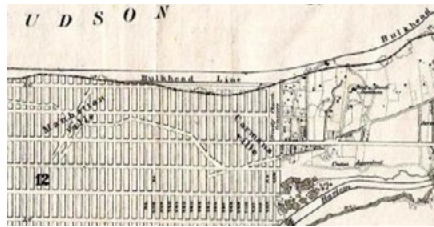
ON JULY 14 WE HELD OUR FIRST ZOOM ANNUAL MEETING. Due to COVID-19 we were unable to come together physically, but more than 30 of us did enjoy a wonderful virtual evening together. Many thanks to Nancy Gropper for facilitating our gathering together on Zoom. And thanks to Caitlin Hawke and Nancy for compiling all the pictures in the slideshow that we displayed as the meeting began. We will use these again in future Zooms.

After we reviewed the events of the past year, we introduced and voted on the nominees to serve on the Board for 2020-2021.

Then Caitlin Hawke gave a very special talk about the history of 855 West End Ave., where she lives. Caitlin has done extensive research on the building, which was once owned by Maggie Mitchell, a famous actress who lived from 1832 to 1918. Her stardom and popularity grew when she acted in *Fanchon, the Cricket*. Caitlin had many illustrations and lots of other historical information about other buildings on our blocks. It was a fascinating talk. We will now view 855 West End Ave. in a new light!

At the meeting we announced that the next few newsletters will probably be circulated digitally, so we encouraged all to sign up to join the Block Association email list and tell their neighbors to do so as well. (Go to the [website](#) and click on the "Join Us" link on the home page; there is no charge to join the mailing list.)

We also explained that our guard service has been suspended temporarily and is being reviewed. (*Editor's note:* After the meeting, the Board decided to reinstate the guard service and is in the process of doing so.)



We are happy to announce that we will host another Zoom talk about our local history on Dec. 8, when resident Anthony Bellov will speak about the two Candela-designed buildings in our neighborhood. (See page 5.) Something to look forward to as winter approaches!



View of 855 West End Avenue in a 1940s tax photo. Photo provided by: Caitlin Hawke

## 2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Bob Aaronson**, Security, Spring Bazaar

**Hedy Campbell**, Newsletter Editor, Caroling

**Cynthia Doty**, Chair

**Nancy Gropper**, at large

**Jane Hopkins**, Newsletter Ad Sales, Halloween

**Celia Knight**, Recording Secretary

**Ginger Lief**, Archivist, WSFED rep

**Sue Maderer**, Co-treasurer

**Komal Rathi**, Co-treasurer

**Mark Schneiderman**, Street Trees

**Alexis James Waggoner**, Media

regional  
ristorante italiano

**MONDAYS**  
**PASTA NIGHT**  
All pasta on menu \$9

**TUESDAYS**  
**THREE COURSES, \$25**  
**ALL NIGHT**

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# Where the Sidewalk Hazard Ends

**F**INALLY! IT'S TAKEN YEARS, but we've been told that the sidewalk on the north side of W. 103rd St. between West End Ave. and Broadway is going to be repaired this month. After Block Association chair Cynthia Doty saw someone fall—again!--she put in a call to Assembly Member Danny O'Donnell and learned that the repair had been on the schedule for March, but COVID-19 happened and the work was delayed. Fingers crossed that nothing else interferes!

# The Art of the Flora



The newest landscape feature on our blocks, crafted by gardener, dog walker, and all-around neighborhood presence Precious Costello, is on the north side of W. 102nd St., just east of West End Ave. Take a walk some evening and see it in all of its illuminated glory. Credit: Anthony Bellow

# On Broadway

By NANCY GROPPER

**I**T IS OCTOBER and we are now in the seventh month of social distancing. I have been out of the city since mid-July but on a brief return home recently, I tried to get a sense of what's happening on Broadway. While I wasn't around long enough to do a thorough review, here are a few things I noticed.

## RESTAURANTS

I was struck by how many more restaurants, pizza shops, diners, and so forth have now set up tables outside. Some have Plexiglas barricades protecting customers from the passing pedestrians. Most do not. Our very own **Café du Soleil** has gotten national press for its inventive little table "bubbles," which line the sidewalk in front of the restaurant and protect diners from weather as well as potential viral exposure.

Amsterdam Ave. between W. 96th and W. 106th Sts. is closed to vehicular traffic on the weekends, creating a festive atmosphere that reminds me of my first trip to Europe in 1966. When I got to Rome that September,

I was amazed to see all the outdoor restaurants and cafés and thought how great it would be if New York did the same. Now it is a matter of survival for our local restaurants.

On September 30, restaurants were allowed to start providing limited indoor seating--up to 25 percent of their maximum capacity. They must follow guidelines for physical distancing, cleaning and disinfection, communication, and screening. You can find these guidelines [here](#).

## OTHER CHANGES

While some shops have closed permanently, such as the blinds shop and the noodle shop on the west side of Broadway between W. 101st and W. 102nd Sts., others have reopened, like **Tap a Keg**, on the west side of Broadway between W. 104th and W. 105th Sts. **Smoke**, on the west side of Broadway between W. 105th and W. 106th Sts., just reopened with tables outside and, on the weekends, live jazz playing inside. The club is also offering streamed jazz concerts. You can get tickets for those [here](#).



View of Café du Soleil, back in business, with its table bubbles. Credit: Hedy Campbell

# What's New at the Website

By CAITLIN HAWKE

**T**HE BLOCK ASSOCIATION WAS HANDED A DOSE OF REALITY when the pandemic curtailed paper distribution of its newsletter. While appreciated by many, paper newsletters were not an option as we were washing down our groceries and airing out our mail, fearing fomites and contact with any potential vector!

This made it clear that building our email list is a project all readers can assist with! We need your help to encourage your neighbors to sign up to get our quarterly newsletter by email.

On our [home page](#), there is a button to join our list. No dues are required and, by joining, neighbors will receive Block Association news and our quarterly newsletter straight to their inboxes. Help us make sure that your neighbors join the list. Email the [link](#) to your friends and fellow residents and urge them to sign up. Send it to your managing agent and post it on your building listserv. This will help us get local news and stories to neighbors quickly at a time when we've all been reminded of how important community is.

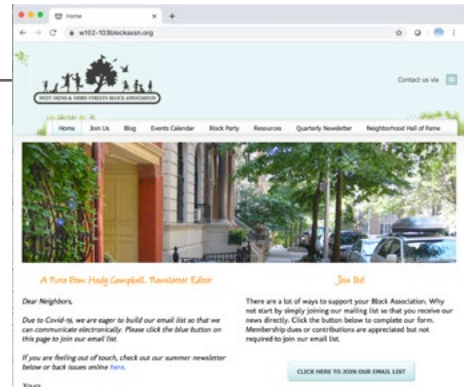
Also, make sure to subscribe to the [blog](#) for coverage of neighborhood history and local events in between quarterly newsletters. Bloomingdale is always the muse for blog posts. Topics covered include:

- Seen in the Neighborhood
- Throwback Thursday
- Hyper-local Eats
- Mom & Pop
- Green Neighborhood
- and my favorite, From the Vault, a selection of vintage Block Association articles of yore, dating back decades.

For a quick fix, click on the category "Blog Favorites" to read the most viewed blog posts.

At the foot of every post, there is a box to subscribe and receive the pieces directly to your email or RSS feed.

Stay in tune with Bloomingdale and stay in touch with your Block Association!



## Tales from the Pause

**W**E DIDN'T GET MANY SUBMISSIONS THIS TIME AROUND. In fact, we only got one. But what a good one it was! If there were such a thing as an award for Most Inventive Way to Fight Boredom in a Pandemic, it would go to Jennifer Ian, whose contribution follows.

*Back in April we created a COVID-19 Bingo card with words and images for each square. Though we went out daily, we were also at home more than usual.*

*We would go to the window and check*

*off what we saw--and heard--on our side street. While the grid included COVID-related squares like "Person with mask" and "Delivery person," it was generally upbeat, with squares like "Anything RED"; "Tree buds"; "Wind"; "Someone w/ pizza"; "Scooter."*


























Perhaps she'll issue a winter version?

Have a special story to tell about your experiences during the pandemic?

Please send it to [editor@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:editor@w102-103blockassn.org)

### COVID-19 BINGO

Stand at your window to play while sheltering at home. And stay safe!

Construction (active or not) 	Anything RED excluding tail lights 	Dog 	Person with helmet 	Baby stroller/carrige 
Trash/recycling can 	Someone w/pizza 	Someone wearing a coat not black or navy 	Light breeze 	Truck 
Delivery person 	Got the mail! 	Person with mask 	Tree buds/blooms 	Birds chirping 
Wind 	Someone w/groceries 	Sounds of neighbors 	Light in neighbor's apt 	Scooter 
Moving cars 	A cardinal (the bird... or clergy!)  <b>Instant win!</b>	Bird in tree or flying 	Apt(s) with open curtains 	Flowers 

Created by Jennifer Ian, March 25, 2020

# Meet Your Talented Neighbors

By JULIA C. SPRING

## MARY JO PAGANO

The youth orchestra of the Chamber Music Center of New York, which Mary Jo founded and directs, presents concerts at **6 p.m. Saturdays** near the Ellington in the Park café, in Riverside Park at W. 105th St. (the lowest level). The musicians wear masks and are physically distant, with bags for the woodwinds. The concerts will continue as long as the weather permits.

## YOKO COHEN

Yoko's sculpture is included in the 2020 Art Students League Merit Scholarship exhibition; see it [here](#). Scroll through the photos to come to hers, where she is listed as Yocheved. Do it soon, before the exhibit closes!

## ANTHONY BELLOV

Award-winning videographer and longtime volunteer at the **Merchant's House Museum**, a rare intact 1832 late-Federal brick exterior with Greek revival rooms, Anthony is presenting "behind the ropes" video tours of the museum's interior and vintage lighting in **October, November, and December**. Go to the [museum website](#) to check the schedule and buy tickets. The museum has reopened with a number of exhibits and local walking tours.

## BLOOMINGDALE 2020 HISTORY PROJECT

The project is soliciting photos and paragraphs to memorialize the continuing pandemic. Contributions are solicited through the end of **December** on its [website](#).

## AMY SCHNITZER

Amy is selling her functional pottery—vases, bowls, cups, incense holders—fired with gas reduction, salt, and wood, which create rich colors and surprise results. You can see the work on her [website](#), and buy it on Etsy [here](#). Better yet, contact her directly at [amy\\_schnitzer@yahoo.com](mailto:amy_schnitzer@yahoo.com) to get a neighborly 25 percent off, plus free delivery.

## NEW PLAZA CINEMA

This [organization](#) has begun offering virtual movies as well as three- and five-day rentals for independent films. Movies and fundraising for a good cause!

## BLOOMINGDALE AGING IN PLACE GROUPS

The [collage](#) and [photography](#) groups on the BAiP [website](#) have new autumn artwork. The photography group, under Ozzie Alfonso's tutelage, is 10 years old. Its October gallery is its 100th; the 98th was *Life in the Time of COVID-19*.

## BLOOMINGDALE SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Scroll down the music school's [home page](#) to find a link to the episode of NBC's *George to the Rescue* where the school's recent renovation was featured.

## ORFEO DUO

Also known for their What a Neighborhood! project, the Orfeo Duo will be online with their Riverside accordion concert after **October 6** as part of the Sacred Music at Columbia series. You can see the concert [here](#).

*Do you have an upcoming publication, release, concert, exhibition, or other arts event, physical or virtual? Let me know. Send questions or notices for inclusion in the Winter 2020 Newsletter (or beyond) to [creative@w102-103blockassn.org](mailto:creative@w102-103blockassn.org). Do it today, before you forget!*



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# Bloomington Aging in Place

## Promoting Wellness in the BAiP Community

By MARIAN ANDERSON AND PHYLLIS SPERLING

**I**T IS MONDAY EVENING. The faces of 50 people appear on a screen. There are no sounds. All are muted in preparation for what has now become for them, BAiP neighbors, a routine activity. A familiar voice reminds everyone that they are about to begin . . . begin what? Chair Yoga, of course! And over the next 60 minutes, the gentle, calming voice of Nobue Hirabayashi, yoga instructor, guides everyone in movements that encompass, in incremental fashion, every muscle from head to feet, fingers to toes, then ends with a few minutes of guided relaxation. Another announcement informs everyone that breakout rooms will begin. Breakout rooms--what are these? Who breaks out of what, and why?

And with this announcement, another Zoom-based wellness session ends and segues into neighbors finding neighbors at a time when people need community.

Wellness is a large component of BAiP activities and encompasses more than the familiar physical exercise. It is focused on keeping members safe and comfortable, and building community. This is done through group activities, including a menu of exercise options led by volunteers, as well as through instructor-led classes several times a week. The breakout rooms that follow each Zoom session provide members with opportunities to connect in groups of six to eight and, as one participant has noted, "to engage with old friends and make new ones and keeps me

showing up every time."

Pre-pandemic, exercise groups included walking, Ping-Pong, tennis, swimming, and qigong. Instructor-led wellness classes included two sessions each of yoga, tai chi, and movement. These were further balanced by numerous member-led social-activity, reading, art, and dining groups. Together, these programs promoted a broad sense of wellness, which aimed to diminish social isolation and foster healthy aging. But with the pandemic, BAiP's in-person activities were canceled.

Undeterred, BAiP moved wellness classes to the Zoom platform, with the following sessions now offered to all members:

- On Wednesdays and Fridays, Chair Yoga classes focus on stretching to improve flexibility and balance and can be done sitting or standing.
- On Thursdays, BAiP offers a new dance movement class in collaboration with the nonprofit Dances for a Variable Population: Movement Speaks. The exhilarating class combines music and gentle aerobic movement to very danceable songs and encourages improvised movement and interpretive dancing.
- A new class, Gentle Yoga, will begin soon on Mondays. Slightly more strenuous than the Wednesday and Friday yoga classes, it will be done standing.
- Additionally, a mindfulness workshop is planned for this fall and will be led by Nobue Hirabayashi, a wonderful instructor who has been with BAiP for several years.

Should we wonder about the benefits of our wellness offerings for BAiP members, see the following testimonials from participants:

- *"At the end of each session, [Nobue] leaves me with a sense of accomplishment and serenity."*
- *"[I'm] keeping my strength, balance, and flexibility while unable to attend exercise classes and physical therapy in person. Also [I like] being able to exercise with my husband."*
- *"In this day and age, it is wonderful to have something to look forward to and participate in three times a week."*
- *"[It] helps to keep me in touch with the UWS I miss so much."*

All of BAiP's instructor-led wellness classes are free and open to BAiP members.

If you are not yet a member of BAiP, sign up [here](#). Membership is free and open to adults residing on the West Side between W. 96th and W. 110th Sts.

For BAiP wellness program information, please email BAiP's Activities co-chairs Caitlin Hawke and Phyllis Sperling at [activities@bloominplace.org](mailto:activities@bloominplace.org). If you don't use email, you may leave a message at: (212) 842-8831, x16.

*Marian Anderson is a BAiP board member and chair of the BAiP Presents Planning Committee.*

*Phyllis Sperling is co-chair of the BAiP Activities Committee.*

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# TriBloomingtondale:

## A Chance to Build the Community We Want and Need

By CAITLIN HAWKE

SIX YEARS OLD, THE TRIBLOOMINGDALE INITIATIVE unites our Block Association, Bloomingdale Aging in Place, and the West 104th Street Block Association in joint activities. To read more about what's on tap, see our [website](#). Of course, with the pandemic, in-person activities like the walking group on Sundays have been largely curtailed. But if the pandemic taught us anything, it is the importance of social fabric and connectedness.

Given this pause, we are in search of three volunteers:

- **Coordinator for the TriBloomingtondale Initiative**  
Are you a good bridge builder? We're looking for a coordinator to work with our Block Association, BAiP, and the West 104th Street Block Association to build activities involving neighbors of all ages, from reading groups to exercise groups to cleanup and snow-removal squads.
- **Group Leader for the Networking in the Neighborhood Group**  
With so many residents now working from home, we would like to move our sole-proprietor group, Networking in the Neighborhood, to Zoom and are looking for a leader to take over from its founder, Harriet Hoffman. We also believe that opening it up further to people simply working from

home or networking could offer a lot of value in this moment of transition in the labor market. Do you have experience networking? Feel comfortable running Zoom sessions? We would love to have a new leader to reconceptualize this group and take advantage of this moment, when so many neighbors not only live in our neighborhood, but also work here, revitalizing the day-life of our stores and restaurants like never before.

- **Activity Leaders for Social and Civic Groups**

The pandemic has forced us to rethink how neighbors have traditionally connected. We looked across the street and saw one another hanging out windows, banging pots and pans. How great would it be to deepen connections and do more things together? We are looking for activity leaders: Want to run a discussion group or book group online for neighbors in all three organizations?

"Think globally and act locally" has a new resonance. TriBloomingtondale is a wonderful opportunity to make local bonds, to feel more rooted in our special neighborhood, and to build the community we want and need.

Please reach out if you are interested in taking on any of the roles above: [chawke@bloominplace.org](mailto:chawke@bloominplace.org).

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